

TEXT OF AS-SADAT'S OCTOBER ANNIVERSARY INTERVIEW

JN062200Y Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1915 GMT 6 Oct 77 JN/NC

[Interview given 6 October by President Muhammad Anwar as-Sadat to Mrs Himmat Mustafa of the Egyptian television on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the October war--recorded]

[Text] [Question] History will certainly pause for a long time before the 6 October war as a turning point in the contemporary history of Egypt and the surrounding area. Recording facts and teaching them to our modern generation is a matter worthy of attention and interest. Furthermore, we should benefit from the great October victory, which in the opinion of the military establishments all over the world--East and West--was a military triumph and a historic turning point in modern warfare techniques. We are filled with pride as we forget the sad days, the humiliation and the feeling of the inability to resist defeat when the Israeli soldiers and flag were on the banks of the canal facing our forces. We even believed all the allegations the enemy made about us, as if defeat had been imposed on us forever. But let us now live the movements of our great victory with the leader of that great victory. On our national occasions, we always pause to study the course of our struggle and make it an opportunity to further clarify vision. Gentlemen, we have here the leader of victory, the man of Egypt, President Muhammad Anwar as-Sadat. Happy Holiday, Mr President.

[Answer] Happy holiday to you all.

[Question] This is the first time, Mr President, you are meeting directly with the great people of Egypt, who are very proud of the October victory, in which all age groups participated. The Egyptian people are still living the moments of this victory and exploiting its results. As you have always done, Mr President, on such great national occasions, we hope that you will dot the I's in explaining all events because this will help us to further utilize our victories for the benefit of our people. With your permission, Mr President, we would like to start with the period that was lived by all age groups--the period of the post-1967 defeat--from the military standpoint.

[Answer] In the name of God, I was overwhelmed with joy in those days which are remembered and which will continue to be remembered for generations and centuries to come. They will continue to leave their impact on the world, not only on our area, or on the Middle East or the Third World, but on the whole world. People record events abroad because they always depend on the scientific method. Therefore, they are now saying that the situation in the pre-October 1973 world was completely different from that of the post-October world. World analysts admit this. The pre-October world was a world different from that of the post-October world. You are trying to take me back to the days which we experienced after the 5 June 1967 defeat. Indeed these were some of the most difficult days I have ever experienced. I might go back to the few days that preceded 5 June, specifically Friday, 2 June.

After President Jamal 'Abd an-Nasir, may his soul rest in peace, made the decision to close the Straits of Tiran in May 1967, we used to go daily to the armed forces general command, that is, from 24 or 25 May 1967 to Friday, 2 June. We went to the armed forces general command every night.

However, this [the expulsion of Soviet experts from Egypt] could have been done in a more gentle way than it was done had they not issued the statement on lack of fighting ability and treated me the way they did--in a way in which I never want to be treated nor want to treat anyone. Where have we reached?

[Question] We have reached the date just after Your Excellency took office in 1971 and the beginning of 1972.

[Answer] In 1972, after the decisive year.

[Question] Yes.

[Answer] In 1972, I defended the Soviets while I was suppressing the bitterness and the pain. I went to them. The last visit was in 1972. My last visit to Moscow was in April 1972. They asked me to go to them. On the previous 3 visits, I insisted on going. This time they insisted that I go even if only for 24 hours. Why? It so happened that Nixon was going to visit them in 1 month to discuss the issue of detente. Nixon was going to visit Moscow for the first time. After the visit, the statement on lack of military ability was issued.

Some say that the Soviet Union has a policy. All right. Yesterday, a U.S.-Soviet statement was issued. I have been telling them always that the big powers' stand is one--the United States and the Soviet Union. There is no need to attribute to the Soviet Union stands which it does not uphold but uses for propaganda. However, the statement was issued yesterday or the day before yesterday--the statement with which the foreign ministers of the entire world agreed but which is now exciting Israel and getting on its nerves.

I have been saying so all my life but nobody believed me. After the detente, after this and after the neglect they showed and the story of the Soviet experts, which I have often explained, I issued my decision and removed the Soviet experts. Something then happened that served me in what is called strategic deception. As we have strategic guidance in which the civilian chief of state sends to the military commander in chief the complete picture and the changes and so forth and the aim of the battle, we also have strategic deception which we began as soon as we started preparing for our battle. What is strategic deception? It is a plan to make the enemy facing me believe that I am not ready for war. As simple as that. What helped me in this was the Soviet Union, without realizing it.

As part of the campaign of violence it launched against me, the Soviet Union sent word to the experts and to its agents, the agents of the Soviet Union, the Soviet left not the Egyptian left--no, the leftist agents I have here. It sent them instructions to attack, that is, to attack the regime in 1972. There was sectarian strife at the time. They said that there was sectarian strife. In the university, the agents moved among the students. I thank God that the students here have always been a sound lot. Those elements were small gangs all their lives. However, they rose up and demonstrated. This is a long story.

As part of the operation, what did the Soviet Union do? It was fighting me, not knowing that it was serving me in an indirect manner. No. It was doing me the greatest service in history and affording me the great opportunity in the strategic deception I was trying to implement. The Soviet Union leaked a paper to the Arab nation and to the West.

What put Israel back on its feet and saved it from leaving the road to Tel Aviv open, as Dayan had said in front of all the world newsmen? There were two things. First of all, the United States entered the war on the side of Israel and sent equipment to Al-Arish, behind the front, on my soil and in my country.

[Question] Had Israel asked for help?

[Answer] Right. It had asked for help. I have told this story before. I said that their appeal was: "Save Israel, aid Israel. We need 400 tanks immediately because we lost that many tanks on the Egyptian front." Of course, the United States officially recorded this appeal. When did they make this appeal? It was on the fourth day, Tuesday, 10 [as heard] October. On Thursday, 4 [as heard] October, Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban was in the United States. He attended the General Assembly meeting in September and then left [presumably for New York] because of the Jewish appeal fund in the United States. Kissinger was the secretary of state at the time. Rogers had gone and Kissinger assumed the post of secretary of state. Kissinger sent for Abba Eban to meet with him. Eban called on Kissinger in his office on 4 October, 2 days before the battle. At the time in 1973, Kissinger had met twice with Hafiz Isma'il, our national security adviser, in Paris. I announced the visit at the time. It was not a secret visit.

Hafiz Isma'il discussed with Kissinger the question of settlement and expressed our opinion on peace and a peaceful settlement. Kissinger told Hafiz Isma'il very frankly: "You talk as though you were the victors. The world deals with facts. You have been defeated. Speak one language and then the United States will be able to extend aid to you. But let us be practical. You are talking as though you were the victors. You must know that facts should influence all actions. We cannot perform miracles for you as long as you are in your present position. You must change the status quo."

Hafiz Isma'il asked: "How can we change it?" Kissinger answered: "Through a military battle. If the position is not changed militarily, I cannot do anything. I wish you to convey some advice from me to As-Sadat. I have not seen him and do not know him." Our relations with the United States were severed at that time. Kissinger told Isma'il: "I have not seen As-Sadat and do not know him. But I feel that the man wants to conduct a dialog and wants to build his country. Give him some advice from me. Tell him: Do not try to change the military situation because another defeat of the 1967 type would do away with any hope for a peaceful or any other settlement. Nobody would be able to speak to Israel."

This conversation took place in just such frankness. When did this happen? It happened in February and April 1973. We now come to 4 October 1973. Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban made his speech at the General Assembly in September. In October he went on a tour to collect funds. On 4 October, Kissinger asked to see him. He met with Kissinger at his office in the U.S. State Department. Kissinger told him: "You are the victors now and the Arabs are the vanquished. The initiative must come from you to preserve the dignity of these people." There was a possibility then. Kissinger had at that time concluded deals on the Vietnam operation, international detente and U.S. relations with China. Following the few deals he concluded at that time, he was described as the international magician. He was at that time finished with the intricate Vietnamese (?problem). Kissinger told Eban: "Let the initiative come from you. There is a man in Egypt who, we feel, wants to hold a dialog and turn his attention to building. You must offer something yourselves."

On 4 October, Abba Eban answered in all simplicity: "Why should we offer anything? Egypt and the Arabs will not have political or military strength for the next 50 years. They are a corpse. We know the Arabs. Let us deal with them. Leave us alone and do not interfere."

Eban left and the war broke out 2 days later. This aroused the pity of Kissinger, who, as he told me, sought God's help for Egypt and for the East and thought that the entire issue was over. He felt that Israel would get on its high horse again. This was on Thursday. On Tuesday, 10 October, Dayan said what he said. You ask what has the October war done. Today we can see the nervousness and madness in Israel. There is an unnatural kind of madness in Israel now. Why this madness? It is because the Israelis never believed the day would come when the Arabs would be able to fight and absorb the technology of the first rocket and electronic war in Arab history. This has been recorded.

As I have said, the 10 centimeters on the east bank changed everything. These were not just 10 centimeters--they were 15-20 km. After the second disengagement, it was possible for the Arab nation to restore its position and regain confidence in itself. Arab militarism, Egyptian militarism in particular, was able to regain confidence in itself. The world is now listening to us because we are now speaking the language of the age and because we have absorbed the technology of the age. All our analyses and actions are based on the technology of the age. All soldiers who participated in the military battle, as I have already said, absorbed this technology. What I have to say about military science could fill volumes. This is the highest military technology and one of the most complicated sciences in the world. I say that we absorbed all this. After all this, I do not say no, no, no as we had been doing for the past 25 years.

I say no to what I must say no to and yes to what I can say yes to. We now speak with the logic of the age and in accordance with the analysis of the age in which we live. The whole situation has now changed in West Europe, the United States and the East bloc, despite the fact that the Soviet Union is adopting the stand it is adopting. The Soviet Union had used a satellite to photograph our battle from its beginning. I sent and asked for a copy but it refused to give me one. It photographed the real battle, not a maneuver. No. It photographed it through the satellite because it had known about the start of the battle from President Hafiz al-Asad, as Hafiz and I had agreed.

The battle restored our self-confidence. It is not only a question of the Palestinian people's problem. No. We must say that the Palestinian problem was about to become nothing more than a museum. Every visitor to the museum would utter a few words saying there is no power and no strength save in God and the matter would be forgotten. The battle did much to revive the Palestinian issue because it touched on the core of the matter. The core of the matter, the core of our problem is the Palestinian issue.

We will start with De Gaulle. De Gaulle predicted this and said as much to Abba Eban. This too is among the memories of the battle. Before the 1967 battle, before 1967, Abba Eban met with De Gaulle in France. De Gaulle was president of France at the time. De Gaulle had drawn up a political line at the time. He said: We will renounce and stand against the state which begins the attack.

When Abba Eban went to him with recordings of Ash-Shuqayri's speeches in which Ash-Shuqayri said: We will drive them into the sea, etc., De Gaulle told Eban: "Listen, leave this aside. I would like to tell you something."